INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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LESSON FOR JANUARY 4

JESUS AND THE CHILDREN.

LESSON TEXT—Mark 9:30-41; 10:13-16.
GOLDEN TEXT—"Gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble."—I Pet. 5:5.

We now return to the New Testament, and during this year finish those studies on the life of Christ which were followed during the year 1912. Almost as though it were an answer to the question, "who are for him, and who are against him?" that was asked in the last lesson for that year, we have presented for our study today, the relations of Jesus with children. In his teachings about children, as about so many other things, Jesus stands unique among all religious teachers.

The events of this lesson occurred during the summer of A. D. 29, during the time of his Perean ministry, which extended from his final departure from Galilee until his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Lust for Power.

I. A Wayside Dispute, vv. 30-37.—As though by way of contrast, the lesson committee has given us this side-light as to the effect, up to this time, upon the hearts of the disciples of those great truths Jesus had been teaching them, about the method whereby he was to establish his kingdom. The disciples lusted for power, a wrangling which had not yet ceased. Jesus waited until they had arrived at Capernaum, and ther heat had cooled somewhat before taking any notice of the dispute. In response to his questioning they held their peace, for, after reflection, they were ashamed of what had taken place, v. 34. Jesus then presented to them a concrete example of what is to be required of all of those who shall seek to enter into this new kingdom. That was a more pertinent question than the one they had just been discussing. (Luke 18:15-17) tells us that these disciples desired to send the children away, hence the words, "Suffer them to come." Ever after, when this mean, low, ambition to be "the greatest" came up, there must have arisen before them, in memory, this picture. His appeal to children meets a well nigh universal response in the hearts of men. The fact that the child was so near at hand is suggestive of the attractiveness of Jesus. The disciples were seemingly afraid of him (v. 32), not so, however, the child. For us to receive one who perfectly trusts him is to receive Jesus himself, and to receive Jesus is to receive the Father, for he came as the representative of the Father, the full revelation of God, Col. 2:9. To enter the kingdom is of course preliminary to any question of precedence in that kingdom. Jesus taught these disciples that as a little child is teachable (Matt. 18:3), so must all be who are to follow him.

Thus Jesus contrasts the spirit of humility with that of pride which they had just shown. The lower we put ourselves the higher God will exalt us, Phil. 2:6-11. Jesus rebuked his disciples and taught them that rather than seek the place of authority and leadership, they ought to take the place of a child, that they may be taught and be ruled.

II. Authority Denied, vv. 38-41. The spirit manifested by these disciples (v. 38) is far from having been removed from the earth after all of these years. The ability to cast out devils in the name of Jesus was evidence enough in his mind that such persons were for, and not against, him, vv. 39, 40. It is not, however, the ability to cast out the devils, but rather the fact that a service had been performed "in his name," which bulked large in his mind. Such is the service that has its reward, v. 41 and Matt. 12:30.

Set Good Example.

III. Angels in Disguise, 10:13-16. This attitude of Jesus towards those children about him (9:36) led others to bring their children to him, and among these were the babies, Luke 18:15. Try and picture the scene as Jesus extended his hands in blessed benediction. What effect this blessing may have had upon a baby's heart we are not told, but we can imagine that a sense of responsibility for Christian nurture must have remained with these parents, Eph. 6:4. Those in charge of these children have set us a good example in bringing them thus early to Jesus. To allow children to reach the "years of undertanding" before teaching them the way of life, is as unreasonable as is neglect teaching children the habits of physical cleanliness, until they are old enough to understand sanitation, hygiene, or the laws of medical science.

As we look back over these incidents we are impressed by the fact that those who engage in such a silly, nay, even wicked a discussion as to the matter of pre-eminence—whether it be that they had a spiritual or temporal idea of that kingdom—stood dumb before him when called upon to justify themselves. Those who fain would send the children away are rebuked, and it is revealed to them that these stood nearer to the Christ than did the disciples themselves. Even those not socially nor personally attractive may be received "in my name," i. e., for his sake.

TWO DEAR OLD LADIES

By T. M'MAHON.

Miss Mary Henley and Miss Maggie Brown were two dear old ladies who lived together in a tiny house at the edge of the city. Miss Mary had made wedding gowns for young women of her own age in her youth, and she went on making dainty baby things for the children of the brides, and later, debutante gowns and wedding dresses for these same children. Always cheery, always interested, never seeming to miss the joy of life that came not to her, quiet content to know all things vicariously, she was an institution in many homes, where "Miss Mary's days" were as much a part of the household regime as the weekly sweeping days.

Miss Maggie was "not strong." That was the way she and Miss Mary talked of the half invalidism that made Miss Maggie unable to partake in Miss Mary's labors. But that lack of strength did not prevent Miss Maggie from doing many things which red-cheeked girls with bounding blood in their veins could not have done. A certain wealthy woman, one of Miss Mary's patrons, contributed a small amount to the support of the home each month, in addition to her payments for Miss Mary's labor, and the two lived comfortably, and attained a reputation for charitable works.

Was there a bazar in the little chruch? Miss Mary's needlework was sure to fill the table and Miss Maggie's cakes were sure to be the most delicious and the first sold. Did a beggar come to the door? There was always food, clothing and a word of cheer for him. The clothing? Oh, yes! Miss Maggie had no pride or semblance thereof. She went, quite as a matter of course, to richer households and begged frankly for cast-off clothing for her "poor people," and she got it and gave it, with a kindly injunction, a bit of encouragement or a quoted text, as need seemed to demand. If it be true that vagrants have their code carved and chalked on doors and gates, certainly the gate of their tiny yard must have been cut to pieces or marked beyond need of paint.

But peaceful years brought a grief to these two. The pastor of their church, beloved of them for 20 years, died, and his widow moved elsewhere. Replacing him, finally, after trials, came the Rev. James Martin, elderly, and, strange to say, a bachelor, for a wife is more than a wife to a minister. She is a necessity of life, a thing taken for granted. No one could surmise why the Rev. Martin had never married, though many tried. His kindly manner, his gentle helplessness in things material and his deeply spiritual sermons quite won the hearts of the flock, and more brilliant aspirants were forgotten in the general demand for the gentle little man who taught such sweetly comforting doctrines.

The Rev. Martin took up his abode in the parsonage and found a housekeeper. But somehow, the housekeeper, though zealous, and quite proud of her position, seemed to omit many of the little attentions that naturally belonged to one ministering to the needs of a man of God. There was a certain shabbiness about the attire of the devout preacher, a certain tauntness of cheek and whiteness of slender hand that made these two maiden ladies, especially, ache for his welfare. They entered into council, appealed to the heads of the church, and finally it was arranged that the parsonage should be let, and the minister should live with Miss Mary and Miss Maggie.

Here the little front parlor became his study, past the door of which Miss Maggie tiptoed, finger on lip, when the doorbell rang. Nourished by Miss Maggie's delicious tidbits, his clothes kept in immaculate order by Miss Mary's careful fingers, the pastor became plumper, and developed a tendency toward the making of mild jokes. His improved garb seemed to give an assurance he had lacked before, and his sermons became not only consolation for the elders and the weary, but inspiration for the young and glowing. Miss Mary sang over her work like a canary, and Miss Maggie's severe garb became frilly at neck and wrists and enlivened by bows of colored ribbon. They bought flowers and real magazines, went to picture shows together now and then, and laughed together like young schoolgirls over their household tasks.

One day Miss Mary was fitting a cloth of lace and silk over a bride-to-be. The bride, before the glass, looked at herself, and then at the little brown lady before her, on her knees. The contrast woke something new in the girl's heart and she leaned over and kissed Miss Mary's softly wrinkled cheek.

Miss Mary looked up, startled for an instant, and then comprehending.

"I know just how you feel, dear—bless your heart! I hope you'll be as happy as we are always."

The little bride looked her wonder.

"You see, Maggie and I have each other, and we know what love is," said Miss Mary, as if that settled the matter, and in a flash the little bride understood.

Willie's Education.

Willie—"Say, Pa, you ought to see the men across the street raise a house on jacks." Pa (absently)—"Impossible, Willie. You can open on jacks, but a man is a fool to try to raise on them—er—that is—I mean, it must have been quite a sight."

HOLE IN THE FENCE

By WALTER JOSEPH DELANEY.

"The hole in the fence!" murmured Wade Rayner, in his sleep.

"Poor fellow!" spoke David Rose, leaning solicitously over his fever-stricken comrade. "He is thinking of home—dreaming of the dear old spot we may neither of us ever see again."

It was a chill, dreary scene, one calculated to banish the remotest suggestion of home and its comforts, its serenity, its fond strong shelter.

An Alaskan wiater held a grim frozen landscape locked in the embrace of pitiless ice and snow. Where a shelf of rock protruded the two prospectors had sought refuge the evening previous—ill, half famished, worn out.

It had been at the suggestion of Rose, the older of the two, that his chosen friend had invested his all in an outfit and joined him in braving the rigors of the great Nome trail in quest of the wonderful gold fields that were making princes of paupers daily.

Thus far it had been all experiment, disappointment, vain fruitless effort. Three days previous, however, they had met a sick crippled miner going home to die. He told of a partly developed claim upon the Yukon, workable the year round. He showed his papers of ownership, he told a seemingly straight story. The partners ventured their last capital, a bare five hundred dollars, and had started out to locate their treasure.

And now, for twenty-four hours poor Wade had been stricken with fever, delirious a part of the time, no medicine available, not even a decent shelter.

But he was dreaming, and the glories of his fancy kept at bay all the grim realities surrounding him.

The hole in the fence! How it came back to him—the break in the palisade at the edge of the home village that seemed to shut in that little

"Another's!" He Breathed.

world to itself. Beyond it was the great unknown of boyhood's days. Even when he and Rose had left on their great adventure, to the broken barrier May and Ida Woolson had come. May to kiss him a sorrowful good by, for they were engaged, Ida to shyly bid Rose good luck as she promised to write to him.

In the vagaries of delirium that rude board fence was a frame of rarest gold for the picture of the last time Wade had seen the girl he loved.

Rose covered up his restless charge as best he might. He too was thinking of his past dreams of the wealth he would some day lay at the feet of Ida with his heart's best love. Moodily as he reflected he watched the snow begin a new downward swirl. His soul sickened as he reflected what another foot of snow would mean in that sterile wilderness.

And then—chaos!

It had come so suddenly that afterwards neither of the two dauntless prospectors could have described the primal catastrophe or its later developments. David Rose seemed to see the great mountain slide into a plunging distorted mass. In the arms of an avalanche he was carried thousands of feet, to be flung senseless into a frightful chasm. To his unconscious comrade it was a dim sense of motion and then nothingness.

Six months after that event a thin ragged man entered the trading post at Vitma, with a brief mournful story and a simple earnest request.

"Where from?" the superintendent had asked him.

"Picked up after an avalanche, my partner gone, penniless, sick, friendless, and taken in by an Indian family. I have tramped it 350 miles to get this far and beg work to start on my way home."

Thus Wade Rayner, this as an end of his hard earned savings. This the home coming with the bright yellow gold that had lured him to peril and suffering, and, most mournful of all, the loss of the best friend he had in the world.

"There's a pack train starting next week," explained the trader. "It's all tramp, for the dogs are light, the trail bad and the sledges carrying all they can stand. Will you try it?"

"I would crawl over the trail on my hands and knees, but I must get home!"

"We'll help you do it," said the superintendent, but in his secret mind he doubted if the applicant would survive one-half the journey planned.

Ambition was dead in Wade Rayner, hope pretty near, but love!—poor, ill, beggard, still did love seem to shine, a beckoning beacon at the far distant end of the lonely desert trail.

At last! Heaven seemed near when finally the wearied pack train reached the first post of civilization. Wade Rayner had received a little package of gold dust for his services as an attendant on the train. In an inside pocket he carried two minute nuggets. They represented all he had found in the land where he had expected to gather the yellow treasure all along the highways.

He converted these small possessions into current coin. Then a train for the east. More dreams, rapid, eager, suspenseful, and one evening—home!

The train ran five miles from the village and he had to cover the rest of the distance on foot. How strange to near the old sand pits, the creek stretch and then the hole in the fence! Ah! beyond that the loved one. Here had he seen May Woolson last. She seemed to beckon him on and he crossed lots to the little garden surrounding the Woolson home.

The house was lighted. How gladsome, how welcoming it looked! And there was a light in May's own room—and May herself.

She stood before a mirror dressed in bridal attire, wedding flowers in her hair. A chill struck the heart of the gazer.

"She believes me dead and—"

He tottered away. A man passed him by, stared at him, went on, looked back. In a vague baffling tremor Wade Rayner made his way along back to the hole in the fence. There, leaning against the aged timbers, he looked out on the dark world beyond. Its cheerlessness seemed all there was left for him.

"Another's!" he breathed. "It must be true. I will go. What right have I, a beggar, a broken man, to intrude upon her welfare?"

He turned at the sound of footsteps. The man who had passed him with a stare was hurrying with a white robed form towards him.

"I was not mistaken, Miss Woolson," he said. "See, it is, it must be—"

"Wade! oh, my lost darling, Wade!" and May Woolson was in his arms.

He had come back—oh, that was all, enough, everything—she sobbed out her heart's devotion. Beggared?—oh, what was that against the flowing wealth of love! love! love. He was ill—she would nurse him, she would win back brightness to the dimmed eyes, courage for the wavering soul. Come! come! to waiting hearts—sister, friends, partner—

Partner! Then David Rose?—returned, after searching far and wide for the dear friend he gave up as dead. But rich—the great claim! He had gone to it, sold it, and the share of his dead partner safely set aside.

But she in bridal costume? Oh, how her glad heart laughed! My dear! my dear!—the attire for the wedding of Rose and Ida.

A bride? yes, upon this, the joyous night of his return, his only, and now! this golden hour, and the very angels seemed to sing in echo of her pure, ravishing joy!

FIRST REWARD OF AMBITION

Polish Writer Tells of Emotion Produced by Sight of and Contact With an English Ship.

Joseph Conrad has told in his book, "A personal Record," how he happened to become an English writer. What is perhaps not so well known is how he, a Polish aristocrat, entered the British marine. From his fifteenth year, though he "had not six words" of the language in which he afterwards wrote "Nostromo" and "The Mirror of the Sea," his ambition was to be an English seaman. After much opposition he began to see his way clear and he has recorded his emotion when his hand first touched an English ship. "There are ships," he says, "I have known well by sight whose name I have forgotten; but the name of that ship seen once so many years ago in the clear flush of a cold, pale sunrise. I have not forgotten. How could I—the first English ship on whose side I ever laid my hand! The name—I read it letter by letter on the bow—'James Westoll.' Not very romantic, you will say. The name of a very considerable, well-known, and universally respected North-country ship-owner, I believe. 'James Westoll!' What better name could an honorable hard-working ship have? To me the very grouping of the letters is alive with romantic feeling of her reality as I saw her floating motionless and borrowing an ideal grace from the austere purity of the light."

Plain Facts.

"Washington threw a dollar across the Potomac."

"That feat was overrated."

"Who ever excelled it?"

"Washington himself, the time he threw 3,000 troops across the Delaware."

That's Why.

The Lawyer—If marriages are made in heaven, why are not divorces made there, too?

The Client—Because it takes a lawyer to get a man a divorce, and I don't suppose there are any lawyers up there.

HOLLOWTOWN.

December 29, 1913.

John M. Hall and wife and son, Elmer, of Dayton, spent Thursday night at J. P. Hall's.

Mrs. John W. Morgan entertained Henry Coffman and wife and daughter, Erma, of Hillsboro, Friday night. They visited William Stratton Sunday.

Amiel Marconet and wife entertained their son, Earl, and wife, Sunday.

W. E. Fawley and wife and Dexter Carpenter and wife spent Sunday evening with Ezra Carpenter and family.

C. E. King, of Cincinnati, spent Christmas at home.

Ezra Carpenter and family were entertained by Malinda King and family Christmas.

H. W. Tedrick and family entertained G. C. Wilkin and family Sunday and Edward Tedrick Sunday night.

Henry Kier and wife spent a few days last week at the home of the latter's sister.

Hugh Stockwell gave an excellent entertainment at the White school house Wednesday afternoon.

John Burns treated Wednesday afternoon and entertained with music.

Allen Rotroff and wife, of Wilmington, are visiting relatives and friends here.

Bertha—I saw my affinity at the zoo, up in the park, today.

Bertha's Girl Chum (sweetly)—Yes? Which cage?—Judge.

DUNN'S CHAPEL.

December 22, 1913

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Smith, of Pleasant Plain spent Wednesday night with Tom Wiley.

Ed. Turner and Henry Beezy were business visitors in Cincinnati Saturday.

Misses Mozella Hopkin and Leanna Crosen spent Tuesday with friends at Leesburg.

Mrs. Bell Burton is spending a few days with her son and family.

F. L. Crosen and family spent Tuesday evening with Herb. Strain and family, of near Hillsboro.

Archy Bently and family spent Sunday afternoon with Silas Bishop and family.

Vernon Hill, of Dayton, spent Friday night and Saturday with his uncle, Frank Crosen and family.

Mrs. Lafe Calloway and daughters, Susie, Ethel and Florence Sharp, spent Sunday with Hamer Michael and family.

Steward Burton and wife spent Monday with J. W. Burton and family, of Lynchburg.

Miss Blanch Runk returned home last week to spend several days with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. D. F. Runk.

Miss Sears—Papa thinks I am too much of a child to marry.

Miss Knox—Pshaw! You won't be childish for some years yet.—Puck.

"Have you been able to meet all the demands of your creditors?"

"Meet them? I haven't been able to avoid them.—Buffalo Express.